



The King's Ears

READ ALOUD GUIDE

Themes: Being Yourself, Magic

Book Brief: A clever folktale about a king who hides a secret about his appearance and learns an important lesson about accepting yourself!

Author:
Storytime

Illustrator:
Charles de Vito

BEFORE READING

The Cover: Ask students to make a prediction about the story based on the cover and title.

The Pictures: Take a quick picture walk and ask students what they notice about the illustrations.

Prior Knowledge: Ask, "Why do people sometimes hide things about themselves? How does it feel to keep a big secret?" (Optional: Think, Pair, Share)

Vocabulary: Frontload Tier 2 words using the accompanying [Vocabulary Guide](#).

Purpose for Reading: "As we read, think about the central message or lesson of this story. What does the king learn about hiding his secret?"

DURING READING

Check for understanding & make connections:

- Why does the king make Liam promise to keep the secret?
- How does keeping the secret effect Liam?
- Why does Liam tell his secret to the tree?
- What happens when the tree becomes a violin?



Think Aloud: "The king tries so hard to hide his horse ears that he makes others keep the secret too, which makes Liam sick with worry. Even when Liam tells a tree, the secret eventually comes out. A message is that accepting yourself is better than living in fear of what others might think."

AFTER READING

Our Purpose: "What is the central message or lesson of this story? What did the king learn about hiding who he really was?"

Extending Our Thinking: Ask students, "If you could create your own folktale about someone learning to accept themselves, what would it be about?" Connect this folktale's structure (magical element, lesson learned) to creative writing. Have students plan or write a short story about a character with something unusual or different about them who learns self-acceptance, using the king's story as a model.

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- Explore 100 other free eBooks on Skybrary! Visit www.Skybrary.org to learn more.
- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.